

House Resolution 1631

By: Representatives Heard of the 104th, Cox of the 102nd, Mitchell of the 88th, Rice of the 51st,
Marin of the 96th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Georgia Department of Transportation to implement commuter rail service
2 connecting Macon, Atlanta, and Athens; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia Rail Passenger Program was initiated in 1995; and

4 WHEREAS, the Macon to Atlanta commuter rail line is in the adopted, conforming regional
5 transportation plan as well as the current Atlanta Regional Commission Transportation
6 Improvement Plan (TIP); and

7 WHEREAS, the Athens to Atlanta commuter rail was selected as the locally preferred
8 alternative, out of seven alternatives, by the state in December, 2001; and

9 WHEREAS, the establishment of railway passenger service to the general public and
10 connecting points within and throughout this state and to nearby states will develop and
11 promote, for the public good and general welfare of this state, trade, commerce, tourism,
12 industry, and employment opportunities while alleviating highway traffic congestion and
13 related air pollution; and

14 WHEREAS, the citizens of Georgia are now faced with some of the longest commute times
15 in the United States; and

16 WHEREAS, the environmental clearance has been accomplished; and

17 WHEREAS, an audit of the Georgia Rail Passenger Program has shown \$2,342,785.00 has
18 been spent by the federal and state governments through 2006 to prepare the Athens to
19 Atlanta Rail Corridor; and

20 WHEREAS, a total of \$106 million in funding is available from the DOT, including an \$87
21 million federal earmark for the Macon to Atlanta line; and

1 WHEREAS, the Atlanta to Athens commuter rail line has been included in the regional and
2 state long-range transportation plans and is partially funded in the current Atlanta Regional
3 Commission Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP); and

4 WHEREAS, the current funding in the TIP for the Athens-Atlanta line includes \$7.5 million
5 in corridor funds and \$6 million in CMAQ funds for the four Gwinnett County stations; and

6 WHEREAS, the construction of these lines would increase economic development along and
7 around the corridor; and

8 WHEREAS, these commuter rail lines would provide solid progress on congestion mitigation
9 and improved air quality.

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
11 the members of the Georgia Transportation Board are urged to help ensure that the existing
12 plans for the Macon to Atlanta to Athens commuter rail lines are implemented with urgency.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
14 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to each member of the Georgia
15 Transportation Board.